notice of the international community, including member countries of the OIC, facts regarding Pakistan's support to terrorism in Jammu & Kashmir and elsewhere in India. There is a greater appreciation in the international community of Pakistan's sponsorship of cross-border terrorism in Jammu & Kashmir and elsewhere in India.

Recognition of India as a Nuclear Power

2968. SHRI EDUARDO FALEIRO : Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government are aware that the John Hollmer adviser on nuclear proliferation to US President has outlined a two step plan to strip India of its nuclear weapon capability and opposed any recognition of India as a nuclear power under the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT); and

(b) if so, what is Government's reaction thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI AJIT KUMAR PANJA) : (a) and (b) Government have seen reports to this effect quoting the US official. Such statements are completely unrealistic and untenable. US is fully aware that India is a State possessing nuclear weapons and committed to maintaining a minimum credible nuclear deterrent. After the May 1998 nuclear tests, the Prime Minister declared "India is a nuclear weapon State. This is a reality that cannot be denied. It is not a conferment that we seek; nor is it a status for others to grant."

Prime Minister's visit to Mauritius

2969. SHRI SATISHCHANDRA SITARAM PRADHAN : Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state :

(a) whether Prime Minister had visited Mauritius in recent past;

(b) if so, the details of the visit with its objectives alongwith the names of persons who accompanied the Prime Minister;

(c) whether some agreements on different fields have been signed between the two countries during his visit; and

(d) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI AJIT KUMAR PANJA) : (a) Yes Sir.

(b) The Prime Minister visited Mauritius from 10—12 March, 2000, at the invitation of the Prime Minister of Mauritius to attend their Millennium Independence Day celebrations as the Chief Guest. He was accompanied by Shri Ajit Kumar Panja, Minister of State for External Affairs. Smt. Vasundhara Raje, Minister of State for Small Scale Industries, Agro and Rural Industries, who was on an official visit to Mauritius during that period, also joined the Prime Minster's delegation.

(c) and (d) These agreements for bilateral cooperation in the fields of trade, information technology, a line of credit and a Memorandum of Understanding on cooperation in the field of oceanography were signed during this visit.

Indo-China Relations

2970. SHRI GHULAM NABI AZAD : Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state :

(a) whether there has been steady improvement in the ties in the recent past with China;

(b) if so, whether this has resulted in the visit of the External Affairs Minister some time back to Beijing;

(c) whether both countries have shown accommodations and understandings on a number of the vital areas; and

(d) if so, the details thereof ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI AJIT KUMAR PANJA) : (a) to (d) As the Prime Minister stated in the Rajya Sabha on 29-5-98, we remain committed to the development of friendly, co-operative, good neighbourly and mutually beneficial relationship with China. In line with this policy, our relations with China have diversified and expanded.

External Affairs Minister Shri Jaswant Singh visited China on June 14-15, 1999. During the visit, there was agreement on promoting CBMs, having a security dialogue, expanding economic and trade relations and jointly celebrating the 50th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations (April 1, 2000).

At the joint invitation of the Governments of China and Portugal, I represented India at the Macau Handover Ceremonies on December 19-20,